

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. An image forming device comprising:
2 an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium external
3 of the image forming device;
4 imaging circuitry configured to use an imaging consumable to form hard
5 images;
6 a sensor configured to monitor a status of the imaging consumable; and
7 processing circuitry coupled with the sensor and configured to generate a
8 message indicating the status of the imaging consumable and to synchronize with
9 another image forming device to control a timing of a communication of the
10 message externally of the image forming device using the interface.

- 1 2. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to detect a predetermined moment in time to synchronize
3 with the another image forming device.

- 1 3. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the imaging circuitry
2 is configured to print hard images upon media.

- 1 4. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the interface is
2 adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-
3 switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the
4 message comprising an e-mail message.

- 1 5. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a status message
3 including one status.

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1 6. The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a composite message
3 including a plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

1 7. An image forming device comprising:
2 an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium external
3 of the image forming device;
4 imaging circuitry configured to use an imaging consumable to form hard
5 images;
6 a sensor configured to monitor a status of the imaging consumable; and
7 processing circuitry coupled with the sensor and configured to generate a
8 message indicating the status of the imaging consumable and to communicate the
9 message externally of the image forming device using the interface at a
10 predetermined moment in time.

1 8. The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the imaging circuitry
2 is configured to print hard images upon media.

1 9. The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the interface is
2 adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-
3 switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the
4 message comprising an e-mail message.

1 10. The device in accordance with claim 7 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to generate the message comprising a composite message
3 including a plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

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1 11. An image forming device comprising:
2 an interface adapted to communicate with a communication medium;
3 imaging circuitry configured to consume a plurality of imaging consumables
4 to form hard images;
5 a plurality of sensors configured to monitor respective statuses of the
6 imaging consumables; and
7 processing circuitry coupled with the sensors and configured to generate a
8 composite message indicating statuses of the imaging consumables, and to forward
9 the composite message to the interface for communication externally of the image
10 forming device.

1 12. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to synchronize with another image forming device to control
3 the timing of the communication of the composite message.

1 13. The device in accordance with claim 12 wherein the processing
2 circuitry is configured to send the composite message at a predetermined moment
3 in time to synchronize with the another image forming device.

1 14. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the imaging circuitry
2 is configured to print hard images upon media.

1 15. The device in accordance with claim 11 wherein the interface is
2 adapted to communicate with the communication medium comprising a packet-
3 switched network, and the processing circuitry is configured to formulate the
4 composite message comprising an e-mail message.

1 16. The device in accordance with claim 11 further comprising storage
2 circuitry and the processing circuitry is configured to process signals from the
3 sensors and to forward statuses responsive to the signals to the storage circuitry
4 for storage.

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1 17. A method of facilitating ordering of an imaging consumable
2 comprising:

3 providing an image forming device configured to use the imaging consumable
4 to form hard images;

5 monitoring a status of the imaging consumable;

6 generating a message indicating the status of the imaging consumable
7 responsive to the monitoring;

8 synchronizing with another image forming device; and

9 communicating the message externally of the image forming device
10 responsive to the synchronizing.

1 18. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the synchronizing
2 comprises detecting a predetermined moment in time.

1 19. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the providing
2 comprises providing the image forming device configured to print hard images upon
3 media.

1 20. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the communicating
2 comprises communicating the message comprising an e-mail message.

1 21. The method in accordance with claim 17 wherein the generating
2 comprises generating the message comprising a composite message including a
3 plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

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1 22. A method of facilitating ordering of an imaging consumable
2 comprising:

3 providing an image forming device configured to use the imaging consumable
4 to form hard images;

5 monitoring a status of the imaging consumable;

6 generating a message indicating the status of the imaging consumable
7 responsive to the monitoring; and

8 communicating the message externally of the image forming device at a
9 predetermined moment in time.

1 23. The method in accordance with claim 22 wherein the communicating
2 comprises communicating the message comprising an e-mail message.

1 24. The method in accordance with claim 22 wherein the generating
2 comprises generating the message comprising a composite message including a
3 plurality of statuses corresponding to at least one imaging consumable.

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